

What is Claimed Is:

1. A circuit breaker comprising:  
a case including an opening;  
separable contacts housed within said case;  
an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including a first pivot, a first link and a second link, said first link having a first end and a second end, said first link being pivotally mounted to said first pivot at the first end of said first link and being pivotally mounted to said second link at the second end of said first link;  
an operating handle for operating said operating mechanism, said operating handle including a first portion extending through the opening of said case, a second portion within said case and a second pivot between said first and second portions; and  
a third link having a first end and a second end, said third link being pivotally mounted to said second pivot at the first end of said third link and being pivotally mounted to the first pivot of said operating mechanism at the second end of said third link.
2. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said operating handle has an open position and a closed position; and wherein said operating mechanism further includes at least one extension spring extending between the second portion of said operating handle and said first pivot, said at least one extension spring being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load the first and second links of said operating mechanism.
3. The circuit breaker of Claim 2 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm; wherein said second link has a first end and a second end, said second link being pivotally mounted to the second end of said first link at the first end of said second link and being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm at the second end of said second link; and wherein said separable contacts have a closed position and an open position, said separable contacts including a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.

4. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said separable contacts have a closed position and an open position; and wherein said first and second links have an unbroken state corresponding to the closed position of said separable contacts and a broken state.

5. The circuit breaker of Claim 4 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a trip mechanism; wherein said separable contacts further have a tripped open position; and wherein the broken state of said first and second links corresponds to the tripped open position.

6. The circuit breaker of Claim 4 wherein said operating handle has an open position corresponding to the open position of said separable contacts, and a closed position corresponding to the closed position of said separable contacts; and wherein said operating mechanism further includes at least one extension spring extending between the second portion of said operating handle and said first pivot, said at least one extension spring being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load said first and second links of said operating mechanism.

7. The circuit breaker of Claim 6 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm; and wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.

8. The circuit breaker of Claim 6 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a trip mechanism; wherein said separable contacts further have a tripped open position; and wherein the broken state of said first and second links corresponds to the tripped open position.

9. The circuit breaker of Claim 8 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a lock maintaining the unbroken state of said first and second links in the closed position of said separable contacts, said lock responding to said trip mechanism and releasing said first and second links to the broken state thereof.

10. The circuit breaker of Claim 6 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm, an open position, a snap closed position, a closed position, and a flexible cantilever lever fixed within said case;

wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm, the second end of said second link being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm; and wherein said third link further has a projection, said flexible cantilever lever engaging the projection of said third link and holding said third link in the open position of said operating mechanism, said flexible cantilever lever flexing and releasing the projection of said third link and releasing said third link as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the open position to the snap closed position.

11. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein the second portion of said operating handle is elongated.

12. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said operating handle has an open position and a closed position, the second portion of said operating handle including a pair of elongated arms; and wherein said operating mechanism further includes a pair of extension springs extending between the pair of elongated arms of said operating handle and said first pivot, said extension springs being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load the first and second links of said operating mechanism.

13. The circuit breaker of Claim 12 wherein said third link is positioned between said elongated arms.

14. The circuit breaker of Claim 1 wherein said circuit breaker is a telecommunication circuit breaker.

15. A circuit breaker comprising:  
a case including an opening;  
separable contacts housed within said case;  
an operating mechanism for opening and closing said separable contacts, said operating mechanism including a first pivot and a linkage pivotally mounted to said first pivot;  
an operating handle for operating said operating mechanism, said operating handle including a first portion extending through the opening of said case, a second portion within said case and a second pivot between said first and second portions; and

a link having a first end and a second end, said link being pivotally mounted to the second pivot of said operating handle at the first end of said link and being pivotally mounted to the first pivot of said operating mechanism at the second end of said link.

16. The circuit breaker of Claim 15 wherein said operating handle has an open position corresponding to the open position of said separable contacts, and a closed position corresponding to the closed position of said separable contacts; and wherein said operating mechanism further includes a pair of extension springs extending between the second portion of said operating handle and said first pivot, said extension springs being extended as said operating handle moves from the open position toward the closed position thereof, in order to load said linkage of said operating mechanism.

17. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm; and wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm.

18. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a trip mechanism; wherein said separable contacts further have a tripped open position; and wherein said linkage includes an unbroken state and a broken state, which corresponds to the tripped open position.

19. The circuit breaker of Claim 18 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a lock maintaining the unbroken state of said linkage in the closed position of said separable contacts, said lock responding to said trip mechanism and releasing said linkage to the broken state thereof.

20. The circuit breaker of Claim 16 wherein said operating mechanism further includes a movable contact arm, an open position, a snap closed position, a closed position, and a flexible cantilever lever fixed within said case; wherein said separable contacts include a fixed contact, which is fixed within said case, and a movable contact, which is carried by said movable contact arm, said linkage being pivotally mounted to said movable contact arm; and wherein said link further has a projection, said flexible cantilever lever engaging the projection of said link and holding said link in the open position of said operating mechanism, said

flexible cantilever lever flexing and releasing the projection of said link and releasing said link as said operating handle moves said operating mechanism from the open position to the snap closed position.

21. The circuit breaker of Claim 15 wherein said link is formed by a pair of parallel links.

22. The circuit breaker of Claim 15 wherein the second portion of said operating handle includes a pair of elongated arms within said case; and wherein said link is positioned between said elongated arms.